

International Labor Organization (ILO) Recommendations Related to breastfeeding and employed mothers

The [International Labour Organization \(ILO\)](#) is the UN specialized agency which seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labor rights. The ILO formulates international labor standards in the form of Conventions and Recommendations setting minimum standards of basic labor rights: freedom of association, the right to organize, collective bargaining, abolition of forced labor, equality of opportunity and treatment, and other standards regulating conditions across the entire spectrum of work related issues. Here is what ILO says about breastfeeding:

“During pregnancy and breastfeeding, there are risks at the workplace that may affect the health of the woman and her child. In the study, examples are given of national legislation aiming to protect the pregnant or nursing woman from such risks, including requiring risk assessment or specifying dangerous substances that must be avoided. If a significant risk is established at the workplace, legislation often requires that measures be taken to provide an alternative to such work, for example through an adaptation of the working conditions.”

“The right to continue breastfeeding upon return to work with access to facilities for nursing under adequate hygienic conditions is also important for the health of the mother and especially for that of her child. Legislation in at least 92 countries provides for breastfeeding breaks, in addition to regular breaks.”

“A woman shall be provided with the right to one or more daily breaks or a daily reduction of hours of work to breastfeed her child”.

Convention No. 183, Article 10(1)

“The period during which nursing breaks or the reduction of daily hours of work are allowed, their number, the duration of nursing breaks and the procedures for the reduction of daily hours of work shall be determined by national law and practice. These breaks or the reduction of daily hours of work shall be counted as working time and remunerated accordingly”.

Convention No. 183, Article 10(2)

“Where practicable and with the agreement of the employer and the woman concerned, it should be possible to combine the time allotted for daily nursing breaks to allow a reduction of hours of work at the beginning or at the end of the working day.”

Recommendation No. 191, Paragraph 8

“Where practicable, provision should be made for the establishment of facilities for nursing under adequate hygienic conditions at or near the workplace.”

Recommendation No. 191, Paragraph 9